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Role of *Viruddha Ahara* in dermatological disorder and its prevention

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ABSTRACT

Viruddha Ahara or incompatible food is very important issue discussed by Ayurveda. These incompatible foods play a major role in the production of many diseases specially skin disease like eruption, leucoderma and different types of dermatological disorder. The food which is wrong in combination, which has undergone wrong processing, which is consumed in incorrect dose, which is consumed in incorrect time of day and in wrong season is known as *Viruddha Ahara*. Number of food incompatibilities are mentioned in Ayurved literature, such as *Charaka* and *Sushruta Samhitas*. Regularly intakes of incompatible food act as a poison which leads to aggravation of all *Doshas* and causing most of the diseases including skin disease. *Viruddha Ahara* can lead to inflammation at a molecular level. The ancient and recent surveys both prove that incompatible food habits are one of the major causes of skin disease. In today's modern era, due to lack of knowledge about correct eating habits, we inattentively follow the wrong dietary habits which manifest dermatological disorder. Avoidance of intake of incompatible food is an important role in the prevention of dermatological disorder.

Key words: *Viruddha Ahara, Dermatological disorder, Ayurveda, Incompatible food.*

INTRODUCTION

Viruddha Ahara is a unique concept described in Ayurveda classics mainly in *Charaka Samhita*.^[1] In Ayurveda, the concept of *Virudhahara* is very much pivotal in the pathogenesis of the disease. According to Ayurveda, the food which is wrong in combination, which has undergone wrong processing, which is consumed in incorrect dose, which is consumed in incorrect time of day and in wrong season, which

interrupts the metabolism, which inhibits the process of formation of tissue and which have opposite property to the tissue are called as *Viruddha Ahara* or incompatible food.^[2] Regularly intakes of incompatible food act as a poison which leads to aggravation of all *Doshas* and causing most of the diseases including skin disease. The ancient and recent surveys both prove that incompatible food habits are one of the major causes of dermatological disorder. In today's modern era, due to lack of knowledge about correct eating habits, we inattentively follow the wrong dietary habits which manifest dermatological disorder. Avoidance of intake of incompatible food is an important role in the prevention of dermatological disorder.

Mode of action^[3]

Aacharya Charaka has stated that regular consumption of certain food items and drugs aggravates *Sharirastha Prakruta Doshas* but does not eliminate them from body, according to *Chakrapani* this is the unique characteristics of *Virrudha Ahara*.^[4]

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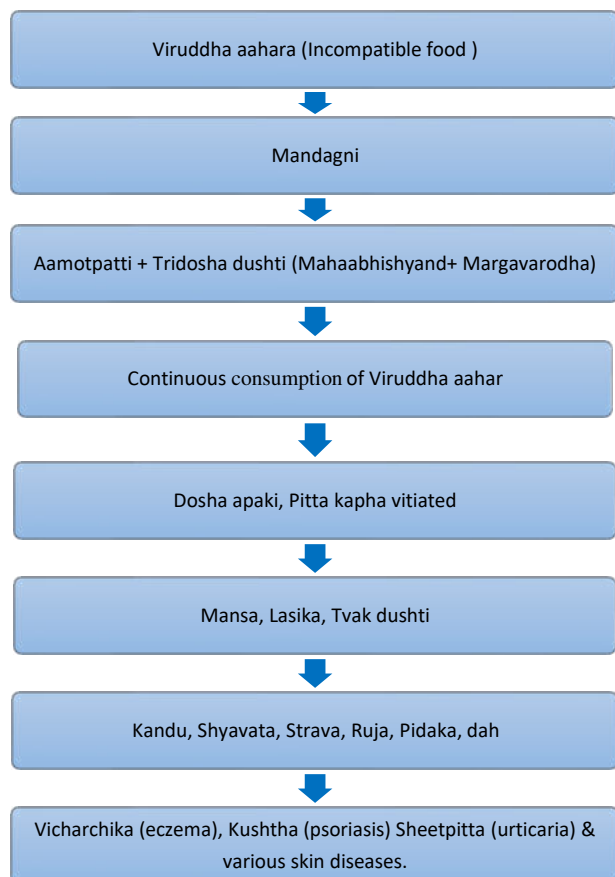
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As these vitiated *Doshas* stay in body, they interact with *Sharirastha Viguna Dhatus* and lead to dermatological disorder.



Types of Viruddha Ahara (incompatible food)^[5,6]

According to Ayurveda literature, following 18 types are described to be Incompatible foods.

Desha Viruddha (place)

To have dry and sharp substances in dry region, unctuous substances in Marshy land. For e.g.

- *Ruksha, Tikshna Ahara* in dry land - consumption of alcohol
- *Snigadha, Sheeta Ahara* in marshy land - cool milkshake, icecream and juices.

Kala Viruddha (Time)

Intake of cold and dry substances in winter, Pungent and hot substances in Summer. E.g.

- *Sheet Ahara in Hemant Ritu* - consumption of Ice-creams in winter.

- *Katu and Ushna Ahara in Grishma Ritu* - spicy pav-bhaji in summer.

Agni Viruddha (digestive power)

Intake of heavy food when the power of digestion is low, intake of light food when the power of digestion is sharp and intake of food at variance with irregular and normal power of digestion.

Matra Viruddha (quantity)

Intake of honey and ghee in equal quantity.

Satmya Viruddha (wholesome)

Intake of sweet and cold substance by person habituated to pungent and hot substance.

Dosha Viruddha

Utilization of drugs, diets and regimen having similar qualities with *Dosha*, but at variance with the habit of the individual.

Sanskar Viruddha (mode of preparation)

Drugs and diets which, when prepared in a particular way produced poisonous effects. For example :

- Meat of peacock roasted or fried in castor oil.
- Reheating food items - French fries, reheating oil.
- Honey that has been boiled or cooked at high temperature becomes toxic to body system.

Veerya Viruddha (potency)

Substances having cold potency in combination with those of hot potency.

- Drinking cold fruit juice together with hot milk or coffee.
- Fish with milk.
- Eating ice-creams with hot chocolate fudge both have sweet taste, sweet *Vipaka* but have contradictory potency.

Koshtha Viruddha

To give less quantity with less potency and less stool forming food to a person of costive bowel. Administration of more quantity heavy and more stool forming food to a person having soft bowel.

Avastha Viruddha (State of health)

Intake of *Vata* aggravating food by a person after exertion sexual act, physical exertion or intake of *Kapha* aggravating food by a person after sleep or drowsiness.

Krama Viruddha (sequence)

If a person takes food before his bowel and urination or when he doesn't have appetite or after his hunger have been aggravating.

Parihar Viruddha

Consuming cold food items after hot and spicy food.

- Cold drinks after samosa.
- Intake of hot things after taking pork etc.

Upachar Viruddha (treatment)

Consuming food items which are not supposed to consume after specific treatment.

- cold things after taking ghee.

Paak Viruddha (cooking)

Preparation of food with bad or rotten fuel and under cooking, over cooking or burning during the process of preparation.

Samyoga Viruddha (combination)

Intake of sour substance with milk.

Hriday Viruddha

Intake of unpleasant food.

Sampad (Richness of quality) Viruddha

Intake of substance that are not mature, over matured or putrified.

Vidhi Viruddha (rules for eating)

Taking meals in public place.

Food combinations which leads to dermatological disorders^[7]

| Don't eat | With |
|-----------|--|
| Beans | Fruit , cheese, fish, meat, egg, yogurt |
| Eggs | Fruits, especially melons, lemon, fish, meat, milk |
| Fruits | Not to be taken with any other thing |
| Grains | Tapioca, fruits |

| | |
|------------|---|
| Honey | Equal quantity ghee |
| Hot drinks | Mangoes, fish, meat, yogurt, starch |
| Lemons | Cucumber, milk, yogurt, tomato |
| Milk | Banana, cherries, yogurt, fish, meat, melons, sour fruits |
| Yogurt | Cheese, eggs, meat, fish |

Food incompatibilities in today's perspective

Viruddha Ahara can lead to inflammation at a molecular level. Number of food incompatibilities are mentioned in old Ayurved literature, such as *Charaka* and *Sushruta Samhitas*. These type of food combinations are not in use in today's era. We have to identify new food incompatibilities, which are used today in day-to-day life as per Ayurvedic perspective. Such food combinations can prove harmful, which may be imparting its adverse effects on immune system, cellular metabolism, growth hormone, and Dehydroepiandrosterone sulfate (DHEAS). A new branch called topography (a science related to combination of food) is emerging, which tells about the combination of basic categories of the food.^[8] As per this science consuming proteins and starches together will result in absorption of one being delayed by the other. Similarly, eating sugars and acid fruits hinder the action of ptyalin and pepsin, reducing the secretion of saliva, and delaying digestion. If insufficient amylase is present in the mouth, starch will not be digested at all in the stomach, instead clogging up the works until amylase in the small intestine can get to work on it. Fats impede the secretion of digestive juices, and reduce the amount of pepsin and hydrochloric acid, so they should be avoided or used sparingly with protein - rich foods. The unwanted effect of wrong combinations of food is not limited up to gastrointestinal tract only but may hamper the major systems of the body.^[9]

A recent study found that a toxin called 4-hydroxytrans-2-nonenal (HNE) forms when oils such as a corn soya bean and sunflower are reheated. Heating of oil will create more oxidative stress creating more free radicals. Consumption of foods containing HNE from cooking oil has been associated with increased risk of

dermatological disorders, stroke, allergies, cardiovascular disorders, cancer etc.^[10] Now in modern era, many dietary varieties are available in market. Most of people consume different varieties in different hotels, companies, without considering its preparation. Therefore *Viruddha Ahara* related disease is more observed in modern society.^[11]

Prevention and treatment

- From the mechanism of action *Viruddha Ahara* i.e., *Hetu*, is the main etiological factor in origination & Aggravation of all dermatological disorder. Prevention of the cause plays a major role in deciding the line of treatment of these skin diseases.^[12] Consumption of incompatible food items should be strictly avoided i.e., *Nidana Parivarjana* is always the best preliminary measure to prevent onset of dermatological problems.
- To cure the diseases by its root cause and promote health; diet plays a very important role in the line of treatment. *Acharya Vagbhatta* suggested that the contradictory foods which have become *Satmya* should be discontinued by quarter and there after *Hitha Ahara* should be introduced gradually with intervals of one, two and three days.
- As per Ayurveda, most of the ailments develop due to faulty eating habits so Ayurveda deals with the *Pathya Vyavastha* (planning of diet and dietetics) in a very scientific way. *Pathya* is the one which keeps the person healthy, maintains normal body functions leads to proper functioning of the organs, nourishes the mind and intellect, prevents diseases and at the same time corrects the irregularities that may occur in the body.^[13]
- Public awareness by highlighting the incompatibility diet as a causative factor through various measure is need of the hour by conducting health camps, Health awareness program. Interdisciplinary programs and talks by Ayurvedic Physicians, Dietician and Nutritional Specialist can resolve the problem conspicuously.^[14]

- Diseases produced by Incompatible food, can be treated with the help of purification therapy like *Panchakarma*, especially emesis and *Virechana* (purgation), also by shaman or palliative therapy and salutary diet.^[15]

Food items indicated and contra indicated in dermatological disorders

Food items good for skin health

Charaka has mentioned the use of easily digestible food and vegetables with pungent taste for skin disorders. The ghee prepared with marking nut, *Triphala* and neem if used along with food is useful for skin disorders. Old grains, flesh of animals belonging to dry land and forest, green gram are good for skin disorders.

Food items to be avoided in skin disorders

Heavy diet, sour taste, curd, milk, flesh of animals belonging to marshy land, jaggery, are contraindicated in all skin disorders.

DISCUSSION^[16]

Incompatible diet lead to *Srotorodhan* and *Ama* formation which in turn lead to oxidative stress to body tissue, vitiation of *Rakta* and immunological reaction. These are the major factors involved in the etio-pathogenesis of many disease. dietary incompatibility can produce skin eruptions, leucoderma and different types of dermatitis. The famous example of this is fish and milk. This combination if taken together will cause skin disorders over a period of time. Some other combinations like milk, honey, bamboo leaf and jujube fruit if taken together can adversely affect the luster and texture of skin. Ayurveda emphasizes on *Nidana Parivarjanam Chikitsa* (avoidance of etiological factors) understanding the *Nidana* (cause) is prime important. Therefore, by avoiding such type of foods and promotion of positive food is definitely helpful for prevention as well as management of wide range of dermatological disorders. Before consumption, one must consider whether the food combination is safe and is according to the rules and conditions for intake of food.

CONCLUSION

Viruddha Ahara is an important aspect of today's improper dietary habits. This can lead to several dangerous diseases unknowingly to the patients. As we know Prevention is better than cure, it is very essential to follow guidelines given by Ayurvedic *Acharyas* to lead a healthy life. Therefore, it is important to enlist the causative incompatible dietary factors and train the patients to avoid such etiologic factors.

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